

Book offers blueprint for Wesleyan way of living

By Kathy L. Gilbert

In a world divided and filled with fear for what tomorrow may bring, comes a still, quiet voice saying “God loves us all.”

Rueben P. Job, retired bishop of The United Methodist Church, uses John Wesley’s three general rules to give Christians a blueprint for a faithful life in a book published last year, *Three Simple Rules: A Wesleyan Way of Living*, published by the United Methodist Publishing House.

The rules from Wesley, the founder of Methodism, are simple: “Do no harm. Do good. Stay in love with God.”

“These simple rules then and now applied to everyone,” Job said. “No one was left out. No one was too good, too mean, too rich or too poor, too educated, too illiterate.”

Drawing parallels between Wesley’s time and the world today, Job says the feelings of disenfranchisement, doubt and fear are much the same.

“Our world is deeply divided, highly cynical about its leadership, greatly disappointed in its structures and systems that seem so flawed, broken and corrupt, broadly conflicted and gravely afraid of tomorrow.”

With so many hurting, frightened people Job says a radical change must take place.

“There are two enormously encouraging truths for us to remember,” Job said. “One, God is with us. God continues to woo us, seek us out, love us, speak to us, enable us and lead us into the future. Second, it has been done before.”

Wesley’s three simple rules transformed women and men and started a movement that became a denomination and transformed a forming nation in North America, Job points out.

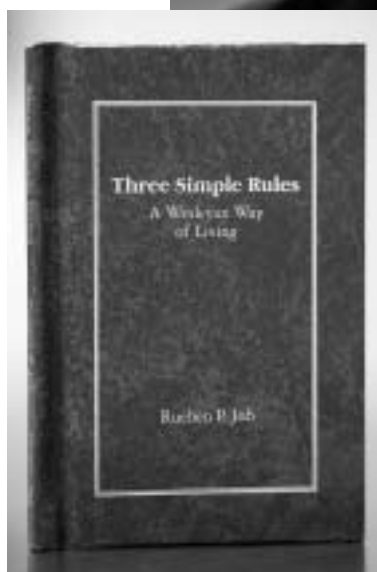
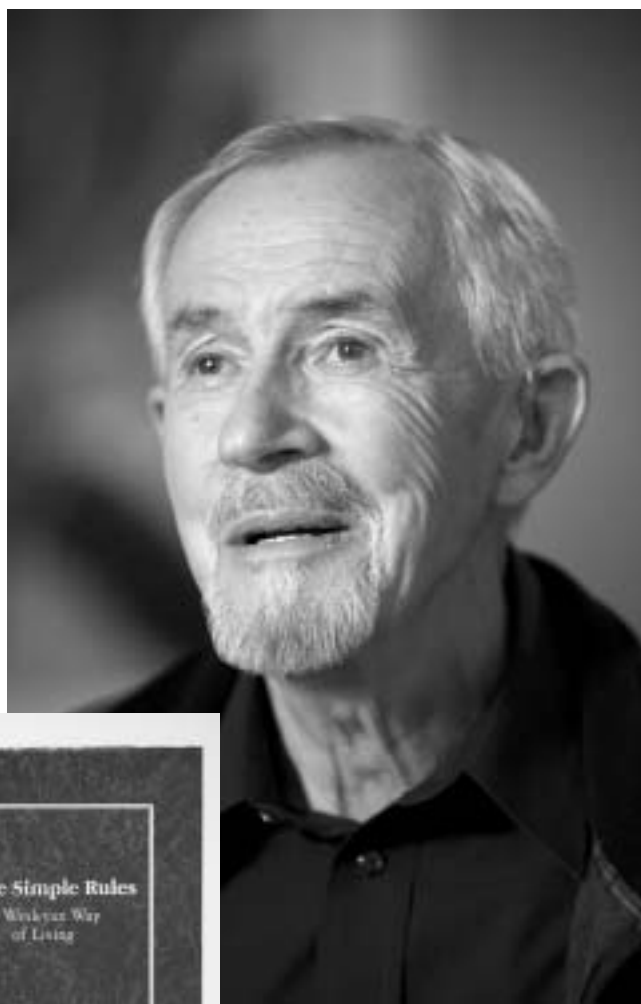
“Today we also need a message that can be clearly understood by persons of every age, every educational and economic level, every condition and circumstance of life,” he said. “And today these three simple rules provide that message.”

Primer for holy living

“In *Three Simple Rules*, Rueben Job tells the truth about God and about our relationship with God. He makes plain the way of life that, in John Wesley’s day, launched a vibrant movement that transformed the personal lives of millions and their communities,” says Susan Salley, executive director of adult resources at the publishing house.

“Job provides a straightforward path that leads to the joy of deepening our love of God and living every day the way Jesus shows us,” she said.

Bishop John L. Hopkins of the Ohio East Annual (regional) Conference says Job’s book offers “a more faithful



Today, all Holston Annual Conference members received the *Three Simple Rules* book at registration. The book was written by United Methodist Bishop Rueben P. Job (above). John Wesley’s three simple rules are: Do no harm, do good, and stay in love with God.

UMNS photos by Mike DuBose

way of living as a disciple of Jesus Christ with personal practices that have the power to change the world.

“If you want to change the world, you must begin with changing yourself,” Hopkins said. “*Three Simple Rules* is a primer for holy living that is both personal and social.”

“Every year I review the three general rules of The United Methodist Church with those who are being ordained,” said Bishop Sally Dyck of the Minnesota Area. “I try to get them to envision these historic rules in contemporary terms along with the historic questions. Now I have a wonderful ordination gift to give them in Bishop Job’s *Three Simple Rules*, to start and deepen the conversation as they enter a new relationship with the church.”

An important component of the book is lessons on daily practice that will help Christians live a faithful life.

“It is not what many of us have been doing, so to adopt this way is a radical shift in our lifestyle,” Job said. “It is a radical departure from our regular way of living, so of course it will be difficult.”

The book offers a liturgy for the beginning, middle and end of the day with prayers, scriptures, reflections and blessings.

The book closes with a song adapted from John Wesley with music by Raquel Mora Martinez, “Stay in Love With God.”

“The rules are simple, but the way is not easy,” Job writes. “Only those with great courage will attempt it, and only those with great faith will be able to walk this exciting and demanding way.”

The core of Wesley’s message was that God loves us all, Job said. “All of us are the apple of God’s eye. We all can claim our full inheritance as God’s children.”

Kathy L. Gilbert is a United Methodist News Service news writer based in Nashville, Tenn.

Special EVENTS

Sunday, June 8

3:30 p.m. – First-time Appointed Pastors Annual Conference Orientation: Terrace Auditorium
4:30 p.m. – Laity Session for First-Time Lay Attendees: Stuart Auditorium

Monday, June 9

7 a.m. – Cabinet Breakfast: Terrace Room 316
7 a.m. – Society for Biblical Studies Breakfast: Terrace 319
Noon – Ministers’ Spouses Luncheon: First Waynesville UMC
12:30 p.m. – Deacon and Diaconal Ministers Luncheon: Sunset Inn
12:30 p.m. – Holston Methodist Federal Credit Union Luncheon: Terrace Room 316
12:30 p.m. – Outreach/Advocacy/Peace with Justice Local-Foods Luncheon: Jones Cafeteria, Back Room
5:30 p.m. – CCFCA Dinner: Terrace Room 316

Tuesday, June 10

7 a.m. – Extension Ministries Breakfast: Terrace Room 316
7 a.m. – Holston UMC Renewal Breakfast: Terrace Auditorium
7 a.m. – Tennessee Wesleyan Alumni Breakfast: Terrace Room 319
Noon – Holston Retirees Luncheon: Terrace Dining Room*
12:30 p.m. – Drew Alumni Luncheon: Terrace Room 319
12:30 p.m. – Women in Ministry Luncheon: Jones Cafeteria, Back Room
5 p.m. – Duke Divinity Alumni Dinner: TBA
5 p.m. – Eat with the Missionaries: Lambuth Dining Room**
5:30 p.m. – Candler Alumni Dinner: Sweet Onion Restaurant, Waynesville
Following worship – Ice Cream Social: On the lawn outside Stuart Auditorium
Following the Ice Cream Social – Youth Night: Shackford Hall

Wednesday, June 11

7 a.m. – Asbury Seminary Alumni Breakfast: Terrace Auditorium A & B
7 a.m. – Emory & Henry Alumni Breakfast: Foundation for Evangelism
7 a.m. – Hiwassee College Breakfast: Terrace 316
7 a.m. – United Methodist Men Breakfast: Terrace 319
11:30 a.m. – Direct Invoicing “Listening Post,” Terrace Auditorium
12:30 p.m. – Board of Higher Education Luncheon: Home of Dr. and Mrs. Bennett Horton
12:30 p.m. – CEF Luncheon: Good Word Resource Center
12:30 p.m. – Wesley Seminary Alumni Luncheon: Kern Building

* During the “Holston Retirees Luncheon,” Terrace guests not participating in this meal will dine at Lambuth Inn or Jones Cafeteria.

** During the “Eat With the Missionaries” Dinner, Lambuth guests not participating in this meal will dine at Terrace or Jones Cafeteria.

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– Holston Conference Communications Staff